

Message Text

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PAGE 01 GUAYAQ 01158 211630Z
ACTION SCSE-00

INFO OCT-01 ARA-14 ISO-00 SSO-00 /015 W
-----019255 211636Z /43

O R 211550Z JUL 77
FM AMCONSUL GUAYAQUIL
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5498
INF AMEMBASSY QUITO
AMEMBASSY CARACAS

UNCLAS GUAYAQUIL 1158

CARACAS FOR CAMILO LEON

EO 11652: N/A
TAGS: CDES, EC (BOHN, STEPHEN)
SUBJECT: REQUIREMENT FOR PROOF OF DATE OF BURIAL OF STEPHEN L. BOHN

REF: STATE 164366 AND GUAYAQUIL 1130 (NOTAL)

1. CONSULAR OFFICER AND FSL CONSULAR INVESTIGATOR ARRIVED
LIMON INDANZA JULY 16 AT 1045 HOURS AFTER HAZARDOUS JEEP
RIDE THROUGH RAIN AND OVER NARROW MOUNTAIN ROADS, TO
CONFIRM DATE OF BOHN'S BURIAL.

2. CHIEF OF LIMON INDANZA'S CIVIL REGISTRY, MR. GILBERTO
AYORA, INFORMED CONOFF AND INVESTIGATOR THAT HIS OFFICE
DOES NOT KEEP RECORDS OF DATE OF ACTUAL BURIALS, AND THERE-
FORE CERTIFICATE LISTING DATE OF BURIAL COULD NOT BE ISSUED.
HE STATED THAT AS IS THE PRACTICE IN ECUADOREAN CIVIL
REGISTRIES, IN DEATH CASES HIS OFFICE ISSUED ONLY DEATH
CERTIFICATES "INSCRIPCION DE DEFUNCION " AND BURIAL PERMITS
"CERTIFICATION SIMPLE GRATUITA PARA LA INHUMACION" AND ONLY
KEPT RECORDS OF SAME. AYORA PERMITTED CONSULAR OFFICER TO
PHOTOGRAPH DEATH REGISTER, AND ISSUED COPY OF DEATH
CERTIFICATE WHICH SIMPLY STATED THAT BOHN DIED OCTOBER
7, 1975 AS RESULT OF DIABETIC COMA.

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3. IN CONTINUING THEIR INVESTIGATION, CONOFF AND CON-
INVESTIGATOR LEARNED THERE WERE NO RECORDS KEPT OF DATES
OF ACTUAL BURIALS IN LIMON INDANZA. DEATH RECORDS
SPECIFIED REFTEL WHICH WERE HOPED WOULD BE AVAILABLE.
(E.G. THOSE OF LOCAL CEMETERY ADMINISTRATOR, MUNICIPAL
OFFICIALS), WERE FOUND NOT TO EXIST DUE TO REMOTENESS

AND LACK OF GOVERNMENT SUPERVISION IN LIMON INDANZA.

4. SINCE BURIAL CERTIFICATES WERE NOT AVAILABLE, CONSULAR OFFICER SECURED SWORN STATEMENTS FROM CITIZENS OF LIMON WHO WERE PRESENT AT BOHN'S BURIAL. DOCTOR TOMAS TENORIO MARQUEZ, THE TOWN DRUGGIST, MS. ODALIA DE AREVALO, THE NURSE WHO ATTENDED BOHN WHEN HE WAS HOSPITALIZED, AND FRANCISCO FLORES, A LAB TECHNICIAN EMPLOYED AT THE LOCAL HOSPITAL, ALL CLAIM BOHN WAS BURIED ON OCT. 9, 1975 AT APPROX 1400 HOURS. ACCORDING TO THE ABOVE MENTIONED CITIZENS, THEY REMEMBER DATE OF BOHN'S BURIAL BECAUSE IT CORRESPONDED WITH A NATIONAL HOLIDAY OBSERVED ON OCT. 9 OF EVERY YEAR.

5. ON JULY 16 AT 1700 HOURS CONSULAR OFFICER AND CONSULAR ASSISTANT VISITED CEMETERY IN LIMON INDANZA WHERE BOHN WAS BURIED. IT WAS NOTED THAT DATE INSCRIBED ON THE TOMB WAS QTE X-9-75 UNQTE (OCTOBER 9, 1975). SINCE IT IS THE CUSTOM IN ECUADOR TO INSCRIBE ONLY THE DATE OF BURIAL ON TOMBS, THEY CONSIDERED THIS TO BE ADDITIONAL CORROBORATING EVIDENCE OF BURIAL TIME. TOMB WAS PHOTOGRAPHED, BUT DATE NOT CLEARLY READABLE IN PHOTOS OBTAINED THUS FAR. ADDITIONAL ROLL OF FILM WHICH INCLUDES PHOTOS OF TOMB TAKEN WITH SECOND CAMERA BEING DEVELOPED, BUT INSCRIPTION, WHICH WAS SCRATCHED WITH SHARP INSTRUMENT IN WET CEMENT, WAS UNCLASSIFIED

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MOST DIFFICULT TO PHOTOGRAPH, AND IT IS NOT EXPECTED THAT THESE ADDITIONAL PHOTOS WILL BE APPRECIABLY BETTER. IT IS REEMPHASIZED THAT LOCAL LAW NORMALLY REQUIRES BURIAL WITHIN 24 HOURS OF DEATH. IN INSTANT CASE BECAUSE BOHN A FOREIGNER IT WAS HOPED FAMILY COULD BE CONTACTED FOR DISPOSITION OF REMAINS INSTRUCTIONS.

6. DURING DISCUSSION WITH FATHER PALOMINO ON JULY 16 HE INFORMED CONSULAR OFFICER OF HIS INABILITY TO REMEMBER DATES OF BOHN'S DEATH AND BURIAL. PALOMINO CLAIMS HE ATTENDED BOHN'S FUNERAL BUT WAS NOT ABLE TO BE PRESENT AT THE BURIAL BECAUSE THE CEMETERY IS LOCATED ON THE UPPERMOST AREA OF A SMALL MOUNTAIN AND HIS AGE AND HEART CONDITION WOULD NOT PERMIT HIM TO TRAVEL TO THE CEMETERY. HOWEVER HE DID STATE LEON ARRIVED IN LIMON SOON AFTER BOHN'S BURIAL. PALOMINO SAID THE PRIEST WHO ATTENDED THE BURIAL WAS NOT IN LIMON AT TIME OF CONOFF VISIT.

7. DOCTOR GARCIA DISCUSSED BOHN'S DEATH WITH CONSULAR OFFICER ON JULY 17, AT 1200 HOURS. GARCIA STATED TO HIS KNOWLEDGE BOHN'S BODY WAS IN THE HOSPITAL FOR "THREE OR FOUR DAYS" AND EMPHASIZED HIS INABILITY TO RECALL EXACT

DATES. GARCIA CLAIMS TO HAVE A VAGUE RECOLLECTION OF PERIOD OF TIME BETWEEN BOHN'S DEATH AND BURIAL, BUT HE IS SURE LEON'S ARRIVAL TO LIMON WAS AFTER BOHN'S BURIAL.

8. COMMENT: PERSUASIVE EVIDENCE PROVES BOHN'S BURIAL WAS ON OCT 9, 1975 AND IT IS IMPOSSIBLE FOR BOHN'S BODY TO HAVE REMAINED IN HOSPITAL FOR FOUR DAYS SINCE BOHN DIED OCT. 7 AND LEON'S ARRIVAL IN LIMON ON OCT. 10. GARCIA TOLD CONSULAR OFFICER THAT HE WAS HASTILY QUESTIONED BY ALTMAYER TEAM, AND ALL INFORMATION WAS RELAYED THROUGH AN INTERPRETER. CONGEN SPECULATES THAT GARCIA'S STATEMENTS MAY HAVE BEEN POORLY UNDERSTOOD BY NON-SPANISH SPEAKING NEWS CORRESPONDENTS.

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9. POST REGRETS LEON'S REPORT CONFUSED THE CORRECT DATE OF BOHN'S BURIAL. PAGE 2 PARAGRAPH 3 OF LEON MEMO TO CONSUL GENERAL OF OCTOBER 21, 1975 INDICATES A CHANGE OF MIND ABOUT INFO. CONSULATE GENERAL WILL ASK LEON TO MAKE STATEMENT DIRECT TO DEPARTMENT AS TO WHETHER BURIAL HAD TAKEN PLACE PRIOR HIS ARRIVAL.

10. PHOTOS WILL FOLLOW VIA AIR POUCH.
BISHTON

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Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
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